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5 November 1953

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DOS review(s) completed.

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SUMMARY

SOVIET UNION

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2. Western officials comment on Soviet note (page 3).

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SOVIET UNION

1. Soviet note reveals inflexible position on Germany:

The Soviet note of 3 November represents the strongest indication yet that the USSR is unwilling to discuss the German question while its bargaining position remains weak. The note makes it clear that a conference on Germany is possible only in conjunction with a five-power discussion on the reduction of international tension.

The note goes beyond its predecessors in clarifying the Soviet standpoint that ratification of EDC "would make impossible the restoration of Germany as a unified state and thereby render pointless also the consideration of the German question."

In the first official comment on Western proposals for a European security pact, the note affirms that only the Soviet formula for German unity can guarantee security. A preference for bilateral pacts rather than a broad security arrangement is evident in the reference to the existing pacts with Britain and France. To avoid appearing negative, however, the USSR leaves the door open to further discussion by stating a vague readiness to "take into account existing new possibilities for ensuring security in Europe."

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2. Western officials comment on Soviet note:

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In Ambassador Bohlen's opinion the latest Soviet note indicates that the position of the East German regime is still too shaky for the USSR to risk any form of discussion on Germany.

He feels that the note reflects the stand-pat position of Soviet foreign policy based on a determination to maintain control of areas acquired since the war while seeking to undermine EDC and achieve its other objectives through Communist and front organizations rather than through serious negotiations.

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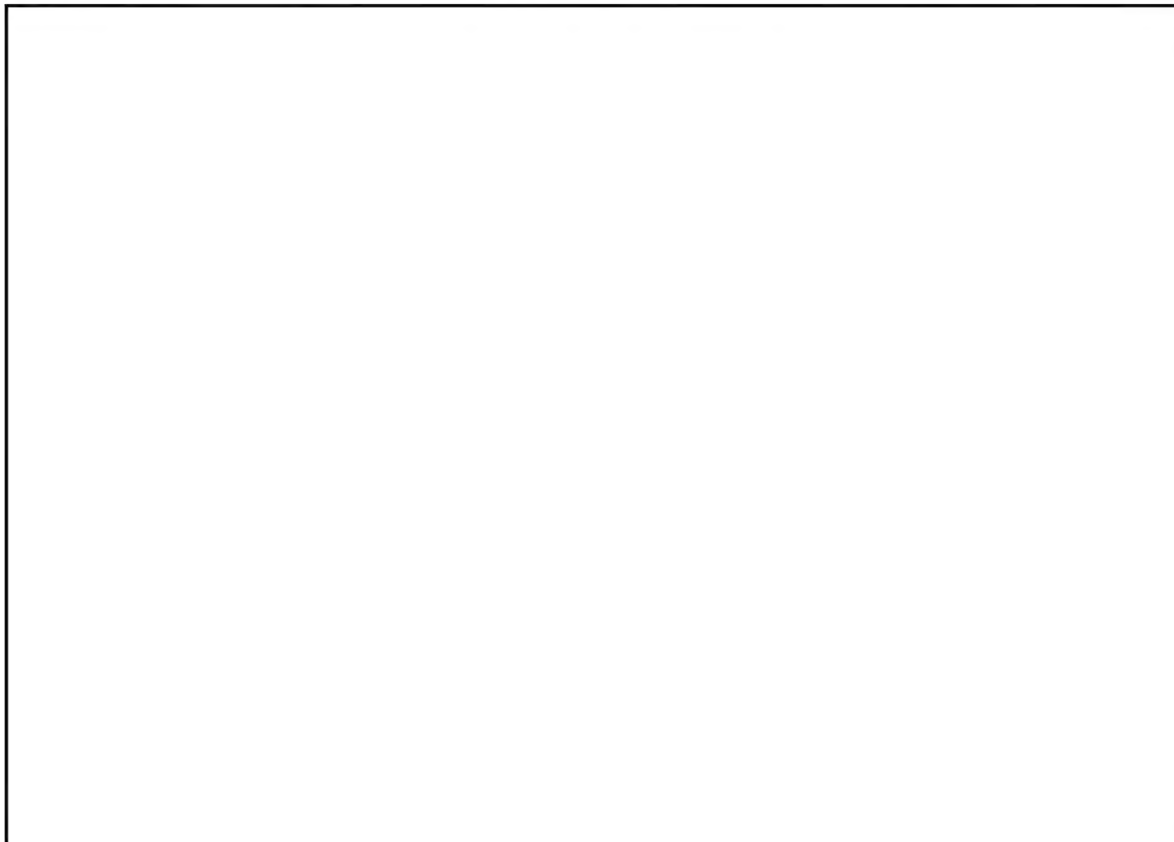
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The Soviet demand for inclusion of China in a conference has become a definite position from which Moscow is now unwilling or unable to withdraw. If maintained, this demand means that no conference of any kind on a major question is possible in the foreseeable future.

Officials in both London and Paris agree on the "extreme rigidity" of the Kremlin approach although the Foreign Office was loath to comment fully in view of Foreign Secretary Eden's impending parliamentary speech on foreign affairs. A prominent official of the Quai d'Orsey regards the obvious appeals to France, such as references to Southeast Asia and the Franco-Soviet pact, as too vague to be of much use to French advocates of a five-power meeting.

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